*In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful*

# GOD

AND

# HIS ATTRIBUTES

INCORPORATING A PORTION OF
"THE OPENING CHAPTER OF THE HOLY QURAN"

BY

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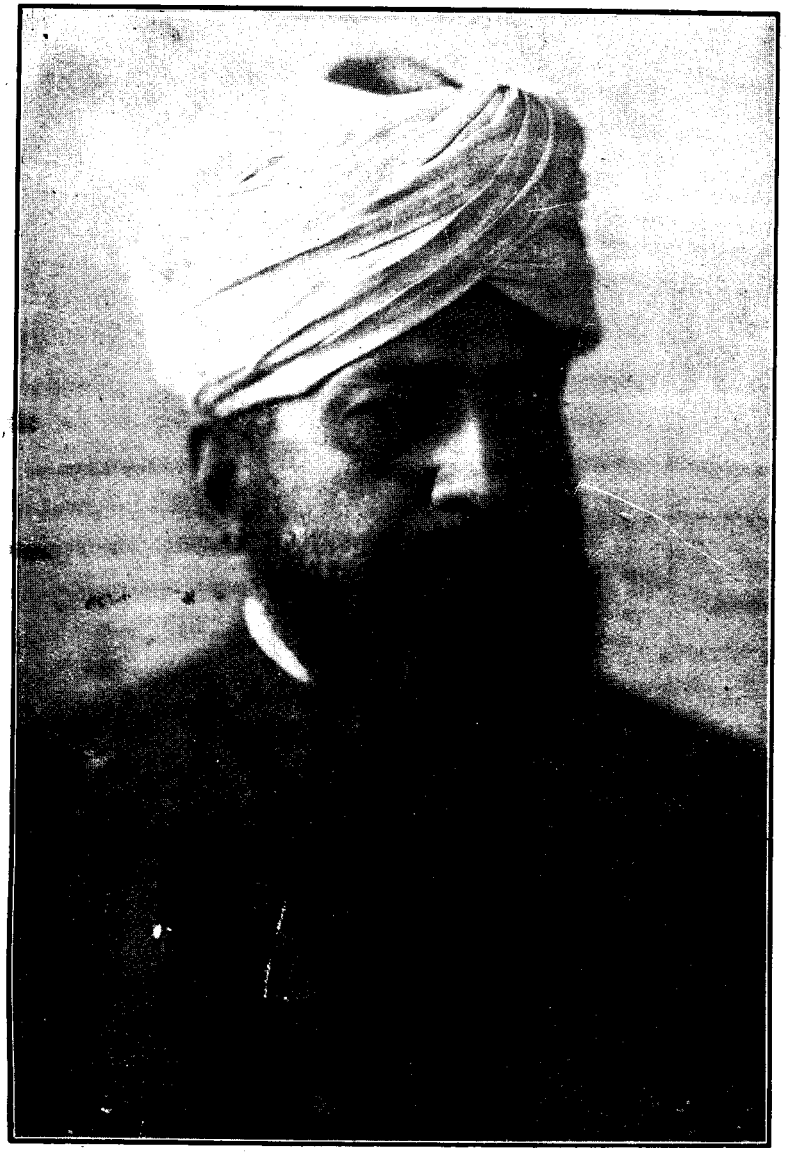

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# THE OPENING CHAPTER OF THE HOLY QURAN.

أَعُوذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ الرَّحْمٰنِ

الرَّحِيْمِ مٰلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ اِيَّاكَ

نَعْبُدُ وَ اِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِيْنُ اِهْدِنَا

الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيْمَ صِرَاطَ الَّذِيْنَ

اَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوْبِ

عَلَيْهِمْ وَ لَا الضَّآلِّيْنَ اٰمِيْن

All submission (praise and thanksgiving) is for *Allah*—the Creator and Maintainer of the Worlds; the Beneficent (in giving free gifts); the Most Merciful (in giving manifold rewards for every good action). The Owner of the time of Requital. Thee do we serve and to Thee do we look for help (as the last resort). Guide us on the right path—the path of those who are blessed: not of those who have invited Thy wrath, and the misled.

What a wonderful piece of literary composition! What a miracle in language! Seven short verses

only, but comprehensive enough to include the whole of the Quran and called, for this reason, the Mother of the Books; few words, but each word equivalent to a volume, pregnant with truths to serve as our surest guides on all planes—physical, social, economical, intellectual, moral and spiritual.

At the very outset it speaks of *Allah*, the Name given to God by the Arabs, together with four other Attributive Names which lead us to a belief in the existence of the Deity, based on intelligence and reason; referring indeed even to quite recent discoveries of science which distinctly tend to promote such belief. These Names not only do away with all those Attributes of Divinity current in other religions, Attributes which are repugnant to reason and intelligence, but make of *Allah* our Guide and Model in the pursuits of everyday life. It is clear that if Some One is the Author of this beautiful and beneficent universe He is the One Who should be followed by us in every way. In short, the chapter is a summary of the whole Quran. It gives us a code of life, a code wide enough to bring within its purview all that is necessary for human thought and action in the way of advancement. It presents a religious creed to which no one who has studied Nature and its phenomenon with care and observation can take exception! To whatever creed or class we may belong, we need a code of life, and such a code, in its most perfect form, will be found in these verses.

Humanity could not make even the semblance of progress while it believed that the universe was a haphazard product, the result of mere chance. To-day we realize that the world was designed for our use and benefit, and it is our belief in such a design that urges us to research in its various avenues. But the very idea of design leads us to believe in the existence of a Designer, and next, in the fixed nature of the ways which He has adopted in working out His scheme. This would facilitate our task of research. The Quran has, when it is a case of essential verities, never left us to the mercy of hypotheses or surmises, but gives cogent reasons to establish the validity of each. It comes, therefore, with strong arguments for the existence of the Designer, but shows us also that it is to our own interest to cultivate a belief in the Deity. The history of progress begins with our acceptance of the fact that there exist laws ruling everything in Nature. It is for us to discover these laws and through them achieve wonders in the way of progress. The very idea of law creates belief in the Law-Giver, and so we cannot make any progress unless we believe in the existence of the Supreme Being.

The world has never been free from atheism. It is more the wrong conception of Divine Attributes than the existence of the Lord itself that gives birth to scepticism. We are asked to hold beliefs by some persuasions, the very acceptance of which

is an insult to our intelligence, otherwise no one can take exception to the First Intelligent Cause who decidedly works in the universe all around. Nature exhibits some morals that appear to belong to an Intelligent Being, we must look to the observance of these laws in the Universe, particularly those affecting our creation and sustenance. We would willingly follow them if they constitute a religion just as we follow the will of a person, out of gratitude, if we are under his obligation in some way. The Quran came with this Gospel, and it therefore serves as a real consolation to the secular church.

It, however, may be rightly asked that how can we follow in the ways of the Lord when we do not believe in His existence. Though Science in its initial stages created an atheistic bent of mind, but it has now taken a new turn. It is more an advocate of Divine existence than otherwise. The world has never been free from atheism, and though it had existed from all times, yet no sacred Book, until the coming of Islam, had tried to refute it. Buddhist literature makes no mention of the Deity. Other books, though devoted to Him, give no reasons to prove His existence. Therefore in these circumstances it was natural that scientific mind should have sown the seeds of atheism. It came to its full growth in the first half of the last century, but received a severe check when it became known that scientific research had begun to discover certain laws at work in nature. It was also observed that

though these were apparently at conflict yet, as often as not, they all served the one end. "Monism" was the name that was given to the phenomenon of harmony in the working of this heterogeneous mass. Further exploration revealed in nature Intellect, Power, Rule and Design, and ultimately the evolutionary principles at work in the Universe. This led men to believe in the existence of One Great Mind working behind the scene Who furthered the great Scheme. Thus the idea of God became established but in a most hazy manner, inasmuch as some were found to contend that these things could just as well be the inherent qualities of matter exhibiting themselves in the course of its development without the agency of any Mind. The Quran, however, dealt with the subject from an angle which made it impossible for any sceptic to honestly disbelieve in the Mind. The Book did not only lay down logical premises and then deduce inferences wherewith to preach Divinity, since this method, scholarly and precise as it might be, would not suit every type of intellect; but it also spoke directly of God and referred to such phenomenon in nature as were too apparent to leave any doubt concerning Him. The Book adopted various way of achieving this purpose, but I would speak here only of such things out of many, which also comprehended the above-mentioned verities as discovered by Science.

The Rule of Law obtaining in the world is repeatedly alluded to in the Book, and has been

described in the clearest terms as a work of God. "Everything in heavens and in earth," the Book says, "submits to Him voluntarily and involuntarily."[1] No one can fail to observe that things in Nature are, as it were, bound to pursue a course prescribed for them by Some One Who has been styled *Allah* in the Quran. By way of illustration it refers to the mightiest things and every other luminary moving in the ethereal firmament as being bound with the chains of Law[2] as being unable to swerve an inch from the orbit of revolution allotted to them. Though moving very near to each other, they never come in each other's way. This, the Book says, is under the decree of the Lord Who is All-Mighty and All-Knowing.[3] The Book also defines the time when this Rule began. No sooner were the things necessary for their further development created, than the Law was at once ordained to guide them.[4]

*Evolution.*—The Holy Quran, as I observed elsewhere, is the first Book that draws our attention to the principle of Evolution at work in the creation of all things. There was nothing haphazard about it, any question of things coming into existence suddenly of their own accord, as it were, hardly arises. There was first a design; then arrangement of original things before their combination; next, they were put in the course which they had to follow through several stages of development till they reached the final goal. The Book also spoke

[1] 3 : 82. [2] 36 : 38. [3] 36 : 38. [4] 25 : 1.

of the various faculties reposed in the original ingredients, which were disclosed gradually in the course of Evolution. It established the working of a ground scheme under the ever vigilant eye of its Maker, through thousands of years in some cases, in order to bring things to their final fruition. The Holy Book ascribed all this to the One Great God.[1]

*Monism.*—The discovery of Monism had to wait for some fifty years before the idea of God dawned on men of science. It was the discovery of the mind working in Nature which, together with belief in Monism, established Monotheism. But the Quran spoke, at the same time, of the Great Designer, wherever it referred to Monism; which was declared to be a part of the Scheme. The Book, for instance, announces that all that is in the heavens and the earth is subservient to man.[2] From the mightiest Sun[3] down to the insignificant atom, everything is created to serve one main object: the service of man. How could this grand purpose be attained if there were more than one hand to work it out? Not even the imagination of all the poets could depict or suggest harmony in the ancient deities. The divinities in Greek or Indian mythology had always some apple of discord to set them by the ears. Again, the Book refers to various other phenomena in Nature that work apart from each other in different spheres which nevertheless converge to the same one end—the service of man. In chapter 2, verse

[1] 20 : 52; 80 : 19; 27-32. [2] 45 : 15. [3] 14 : 23—33.

164, it cites the coming of the rain, which helps us in the production of crops, and traces its origin from the very beginning when the heavens and the earth were created. The latter was made to stand on its axis at a certain angle, and this caused the alternation of day and night. From the torrid regions of the earth water evaporated upwards, and when cold winds came to occupy the vacuum thus made, the vapours became condensed into clouds which were spread about by the blowing of the winds. These clouds came in the form of rain to fertilize the earth everywhere. The same blowing of winds, on the other hand, helped the navigation on the sea, which, too, produced its treasures for our profit. Thus we find several laws working in spheres far distant from each other to achieve these results. The Laws often conflict in their functions, but for all that they are tending to the same end. This is the conclusion as stated in verse 163: "Your God is one God—the Beneficent and the Merciful." Thus Monism and oneness of design which should be spoken of as it were in one breath, establish Monotheism in an unassailable manner.

The Book refers to complementary and supplementary relations existing between things in Nature, and makes mention of the purposes for which they have been created; their propriety, fitness and to the perfection of their fashioning. These four features may be possessed by matter, but it cannot display them unless it comes under the operation of

the Mind. The Quran always speaks of them as instruments to work out some deliberate design. Let me refer to water again in this regard. By means of water our nourishment comes from heavens, and that nourishment is one of its chief purposes. It travels thousands of miles towards a new sphere of action—the earth which is ready to receive it in the most proper manner for the purpose. How can an inanimate thing become complementary to another thing from which it is far apart, while that other thing supplements the latter's shortcomings in producing the harvest, unless some Mind intends that this should be so. The water comes in a most appropriate form, not in a huge volume, as in the case of floods when it would wash the earth of all seeds and gravel which is so necessary for cultivation, but gently dropping, since moisture is the chief requisite for growth of verdure, and water cannot moisten clay unless it comes in the form of drops which trickle down gently in its recesses, and the earth, on the other hand, cannot retain the moisture if its volume be ponderous.

*Perfection.*—Perfection is observable everywhere. Everything in Nature is free from defect and flaw; and contains nothing which is evil. Even man with all his inordinancy was born with a sinless nature. Nevertheless, perfection in things is no mere chance. It is something designed. Had things reached their final stage as a direct growth from their origin, one might perhaps think other-

wise, but a most complicated process is to be observed in Nature before things attain perfection. No sooner do incipient specks emanate than they come under a long series of collocations specializing new ingredients at each stage of their journey to the goal. Innumerable things are blended together to secure perfection. It has already been shown that ingredients cannot combine with each other unless they come under the control of a Mind. The phenomenon presents a very Mighty and Wise Law extending to the limits of the Universe, which knows not only the whereabouts of the original ingredients, but also wields power over them to bring them to the required place so that they may mix with other ingredients. They combine in prescribed proportion and follow a given course. If such things may be taken as an index of the Mind of their Maker, He must be pure of evil and imperfection, and possess all that is good. Science tells us the same regarding the course which things pursue in order to become perfect. The Holy Book refers to these prominent features in the following verse:—

Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth declares the *Tasbih* (glorification) of *Allah*; the King, the Pure, the Mighty, the Wise.[1]

We also read the same in 59:1—24 and 51:1. On another occasion the Book says:—

Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth declares the *Tasbih* (glorification) of *Allah*; to Him belongs the

[1] 62:1.

Kingdom and to Him is due all *Hamd* (praise) and He has power over all things.

The current translation of *Tasbih* and *Hamd* "glorification" and "praise" is not adequate, as the English words do not convey the real significance of the words. *Tasbih* means to declare that *Allah* is free from all evil and error, *Hamd* that He possesses all that is good. No one can deny the truth of these verses as Science will confirm it word for word. They are sufficient to prove the working of the Mind on matter in creating the cosmos. The Book also refers to four other functions of the Mind observable in the creation of everything. They are *Takhliq, Taswiyah, Taqdir* and *Hidayat,* which again cannot adequately be rendered into English. I will, therefore, explain them. *Takhliq* is the infinitive of *Khalq* which generally means creation. But it signifies three other different functions, namely, the shaping, the combining and fixing the proportions into which incipient things have to combine in order to create new things. In other words, the work of creation synchronizes with these three things, though they, in a way, precede creation. Combination is the first thing in origination, when shape and proportion are designed. It creates something which in its turn combines with other created things. So the process of combination and creation continues until things take their designed shape at their final development on the earth. Combination is the first process in creation, coming, as it does, immediately

after Emanation. But matter itself cannot combine unless it comes under the operation of some Mind. Electricity, for instance, is created when a metal combines with an acid. Both the elements are in our possession, but they themselves cannot mix with each other unless we combine them for the purpose. How can electricity come into existence in the clouds if there is no Mind to combine the elements in the upper regions? Similarly, hydrogen and oxygen combined become water. We have got them both here, but they never combine with each other. How wonderful of the Quran to refer to the very action of *Khalq*, *i.e.* combination, when speaking of the existence of God.

*Taswiyah* means the reposing of the various faculties in the ingredients of things which disclose them in the various stages of evolution through which they pass before their final development. *Taqdir* is the prescribing of laws which rule creation in the various stages.

*Hidayat* means guidance to things for observing the proportion in which they have to mix and the way they have to pursue in the evolutionary course from the beginning to the end. These four functions clearly prove the existence of Mind. They work in Nature. They cannot be the qualities of Matter. In short, the said four Names act as the best guide in building up life, so that it may excel physically, morally and spiritually.

*Allah.*—The word *Allah* is very eloquent in the whole religious literature of the world. The world has, from the very beginning, been used by the Arabs as a proper name signifying the Deity. Even in the days of Ignorance, when they practised the worst type of polytheism, the Arabs never applied this sacred Name to any other object of adoration. They worshipped different gods from time to time, but always reserved the name of *Allah* for the One, Whom they regarded as a Spirit, presiding, as it were, over the Arab pantheon. In this respect this Holy Word differs from all like words in any other language that stand for God. They may be used as common names to be applied to God as well as to things, or persons other than God. For instance, *God* in English, *Khudawand* in Persian, *Sahibji* in Panjabi, *Phia* in Burmese, etc., etc., are often used for God, but they also denote various objects of adorations, as well as men of rank and position, but *Allah* is a species of proper name. It may be taken as meaningless in itself, as some grammarians hold, but like other proper names, it possesses certain Attributes. These verses speak of four, but their significance brings within their scope the other 96 Attributes given in the Quran. It should not, however, be forgotten that this sacred list in the Quran is in no sense exhaustive. The Lord possesses many other qualities that stand far beyond number and imagination. These hundred Names are such as can be read in the pages of Nature. We

can perceive them and, to a certain extent, imitate them. In this sense we have been spoken of as prototypes of God and we have been asked to assume His colours and imbue ourselves with the Divine character, otherwise even the working of these Quranic Names baffies our ingenuity. Take an instance, *Al-Muṣawwir,* The Fashioner, is one of His Attributes. We also fashion things in our small way, but can we understand, even dimly, His workmanship in fashioning the various things in their embryonic condition ?

My surprise knows no bounds when I think of the Divine Economy in the selection of these Names for our contemplation. Not only do they serve the purpose of theology, but they are comprehensive enough to bring within their scope all that is needed to guide us through all conceivable avenues of human activity, and perfect our civilization. They are our guide in mundane affairs, in ethics, in economics, in morals and in spiritualities.

Whatever branch of life we may enter upon, we find in these Names the surest of guidance. We may entertain any belief or belong to any persuasion we cannot dispense with good character and actions. We therefore must receive from the Muslim formula of Faith our inspiration for them. We must keep *Allah*—God in the Quran—always before our eyes. We should remember His Attributes as given in the Quran through our actions. For this reason

ew find hardlyany page in the Book that does not make mention of the Lord.

There is, however, another reason for it. We have been declared in the Quran as the Viceregent of God on the earth. Nature discloses the best of civilization. If it is the work of God we can as well command the highest progress if we represent Him in a proper manner. But how can we do so unless we appear in His colours. The Holy Book, therefore, declares it to be our religion. This also explains why the Book insist upon our belief in the Oneness of God. We cannot serve two masters nor act as lieutenant of the two Rulers. Besides, if the perfection of our character lies in our imitation of God's Attributes how can we afford to be polytheist? We, no doubt, have passed the days of ignorance, when we used to bow down before such effigies and we made with our own hands but the worst type of polytheism according to Quranic teachings lies in obeying our low behests. They lead us to do what is contrary to the requirements of these Excellent Names. How can we win favour with the Lord with such tendencies? If Divine Forgiveness depends on our repentance from misdeeds—the fruits of polytheism as explained here—there then its follower cannot claim it. The Book asks us to approve our Lord through these Names, which means that we cannot obtain any audience with Him if our actions deviate from the requirements of the Names. But in doing so, we shall be doing all

that is needed to perfect our progress. What a wonderful arduous task has the Book come to perform! It comes to give us a religion, but it makes our progress to be our religion. It asks us to worship God, but it proposes that we should adore Him by following such of His Names as will perfect our civilization. Let the Moralists on one side, and the people of culture and progress on the other contemplate on these Quranic Names, and see if they can find a better code of life.

The Book properly calls these Attributes Excellent Names, thus negativing the association of God with any form of evil. It is a blasphemy even to imagine that God is the author of evil. Evil is born when we abuse a thing which is meant for good. Evil is the misapplication of things that are really good. Similarly every Attribute that the Holy Book ascribes to God can create evil if misused. For instance, we read of God as the Possessor of love. But love has got its wicked side too, if we yield to the dictates of lust. God is Merciful. But mercy becomes murder in the words of Shakespeare when we forgive those who kill others. He is the All-Giver. But His blessings will create laziness and sloth, if they are showered undeservedly, and the same may be said concerning other Attributes. It reminds me of Nietzsche's Superman. According to him he who subjects others to his will and knows how to make others do what he wants, is the Superman. The conception is perhaps a beautiful

one, but it suggests the idea of arrogance and self-will. A person may have a wrong angle of vision and so cause immense harm to society. Moreover, the philosopher's definition of 'Superman' is not exhaustive. We require other things to perfect our character. We find two Names in the Quranic list of Divine Attributes which satisfy the best aspects of the Superman theory. They are *Al-Qahhar*[1] and *Al-Jabbar*.[2] Both the words have the same meanings but with different shades. The Attributes signify a person who can bring others to subjection and compel them to do what he wishes. But it *must be for the good of the persons so compelled, which idea is wanting in the Superman conception.* But these are only two Attributes of the Quranic Superman. There are 98 others. Islam has taken another precaution in the use of these Names. The prefix *Al* is always used before them in Muslim literature. *Al*, of course, is the definite article in Arabic, but in the case of the Attributes it suggests that they are to be taken in the best form.

[1] 7 : 39 ; 13 : 16 ; 38 : 85 ; 39 : 4. [2] 59 : 23.

# DIVINE ATTRIBUTES AND HUMAN CHARACTER.

Religion, in Islam, was not merely the worship of God, with forms and ceremonies. Its chief object was the moulding of man's character. The worship of God, under Islam, is to follow such of His ways as are exhibited in the processes of Nature. Natural theology is in fact a commentary on Quranic theology. It speaks of God—Whose attributes, when possessed by us, make us good citizens. We, of course, know nothing of God. He is inconceivable, but if the working of Nature has proved His existence from the point of view of science, it has also displayed some of His prominent attributes. The Holy Quran collected them in its pages and called them the Excellent Names of God, and these are no other than His Ways in the governance of the universe. No one can object to our following them, for, if we did not, civilization would for ever remain incomplete. Islam makes our initiation into the Divine ways an essential part of our religion. If we follow Him, our faith, so the Quran says, becomes perfected, and I do not see how, in the interests of good citizenship, even the most agnostic mind dare deviate from the requirements of these Names. As rulers of the universe, we need know-

ledge and wisdom, greatness of mind, excellence of character and purity from defects and error; we want ability and efficiency to make the things necessary for our sustenance; and we must know how to control the various forces of Nature. These things should come within the scope of our ability. The Quran makes it our religion, and for this reason it sums them up as Divine Attributes, because almost all of us make God our exemplar and regard it as our religious duty to follow Him. They provide us with the highest code of morality and ethics, under the name of Divine Attributes, and order in its most sublime form.

First of all, I speak of knowledge, which, in fact, comprehends all other things. If we attain knowledge, all other things will come to us. The Quran enumerates various ways of acquiring knowledge and makes reference to them under Seven Names of God. They are as follows:—

(1) "'Alimu 'l-Ghayb." One who knows hidden and unseen things. Our knowledge of secrets cannot hope to come to Divine perfection in this respect; but our learning and attainments in the various branches of science will enable us to read the unknown things of nature. Many hidden things can come to our knowledge through our calculation, our mental eyes can percieve that which the naked eye cannot, and our mental eye can read many astronomical truths. We can read

the thoughts of others and master clairvoyance by cultivating our occult powers. The Quran speaks of them. In fact, we worship " 'Alimu 'l-Ghayb" when we try to follow this Quranic injunction. This is what the Book calls the Adoration of Allah.

(2) " 'Alim. " All-knowing. The second Name of God. One whose knowledge comprehends every other thing. One who possesses knowledge as his inherent quality. The Holy Name makes it oligatory on us to master the various sciences and perfect ourselves in all branches of learning.

(3) "Latif." One who possesses more minute insight into other things; one who knows how to unravel the more complicated and intricate problems of life. In short, the worshipper of "Latif" is one who reads things that do not come within the knowledge of others.

(4) "Hakim." The word is derived from the infinitive "Hikmat," which means science and wisdom. It also means the using of things in the most efficient and best way. Only one who knows the properties of things can achieve this quality.

(5) "Basir." One who sees things with an open observant eye, whose observation and knowledge of his surroundings enable him to come to right conclusions concerning them. The word is

derived from "Basirat," which means to see things in order to acquire knowledge and experience.

(6) "Sami'." All-Hearing. One who hears every sound and voice uttered in the space of the universe. We cannot achieve the Divine ability to hear, but the telegraph, wireless messages, telepathy, clairaudience, and other methods of hearing are some of our achievements in this respect. Espionage is an unpleasant thing, but a department whose duty it is to detect crime is a necessity for the administration of justice.

(7) "Khabir." One who possesses all the news of the world and is kept informed of everything that takes place on the earth; in fact, his sources of information know no limit.

Though possession of these seven forms of knowledge are the religious duty of every votary of Allah, making him a true Muslim, they are also in the highest degree necessary for those who aspire to bring other nations under their rule; we ought to know what is really going on in various countries. The Quran, when speaking of the Kingdom of God, makes this a special requirement of the rulers of the earth. It should not be forgotten that the Quran does not speak highly of God simply to extol Him, but the Book makes mention of those of His ways which should also appertain to us in the management of our mundane affairs.

Western nations can claim to possess a portion of this power and knowledge, which gives them a certain superiority in the world. The Quran also suggests some of the ways that will help us to perfect that necessary knowledge. They are as follows:—

(1) The cultivation of the art of reading and writing. It was, as it were, something unknown before Islam. In fact, our attention was drawn to it in the very first revelation of Muhammad, which, when speaking of God, says: "Read in the Name of God.....Who teaches man to write with the pen, who teaches him things he knew not before". (xcvi. 1-4)

(2) To keep the ear open; to make a right judgment on everything we hear. (xvi.-65)

(3) To remember things for our future guidance. (xvi.-13)

(4) Observation of the universe. (xvi.15-16)

(5) To study history and biographies that we may learn therefrom. (xliii. 6-8)

(6) To travel with an eye observant of the relics and remains of those nations that rose and fell in days gone by. (vi. 11)

(7) To learn lessons from hardships and trials. (iii. 139-141)

(8) To study the Divine Revelations. (ii. 4)

(9) Contemplation and meditation.

The Quran speaks of four ways of contemplation. The Book uses four different words to convey each sort of contemplation, and the words have different shades in their meanings; but unfortunately languages other than Arabic do not possess appropriate synonyms for them. I will, however, try to explain them here. These four aspects of contemplation are called (1) "Tafaqquh"; (2) "Tadabbur"; (3) "Tafakkur"; (4) "Ta'aqqul".

"Tafaqquh" means to use all organs of knowledge to acquire the truth of things. Those who did not do so have been described in the Holy Quran as blind, deaf and dumb. They have also been condemned as worse than animal. The Quran speaks[1] of those who use their physical organs aright and then make a right judgment on them and add each new experience to their knowledge.

"Tadabbur": to observe things, or acquire knowledge about them that may enable us to find out the object that has brought them into existence; in other words, to understand the ins and outs of things that come within our cognizance.

"Tafakkur." This refers to our constantly pondering over a matter to ascertain what will enable us to reach the root of it. It also refers to our observation of Nature in order to find out the ways of God, under which things come into existance and exhibit their properties.

[1] Chaps. ii. 155, 156, 157; xlviii. 15; lxix. 12.

"Tafakkur" is the first and necessary process of a mind engaged in scientific research. In fact, Tafakkur means the observation and study of things in the universe to find out the laws of Nature. This second characteristic is referred to in the fourth aspect of contemplation, which is "Ta'aqqul." It means to acquire that kind of knowledge about things around us which will enable us to make a right use of them in life. It demands from us not only a knowledge of the properties of things but also of the proportions to which they are to be used. Our knowledge under this aspect should qualify us to make use of things for the purpose for which they are intended. How can one take exception to a religion that makes the acquisition of knowledge under these nine headings an article of Faith?

I have read many religious books and writings of eminent authors on the subject, but I fail to find the above nine points tabulated in any book. Again, the Quran does not read homilies in this respect. It is a special feature of the Book to elucidate its truths and principles by referring to the various manifestations of Nature; it then draws lessons for its reader so that he may follow its principles, and admonishes him to do so. Nature does not exhibit these forms of knowledge as possessed by its Creator, but they should be acquired by man if he wishes to bring the universe to perfection.

Next to knowledge comes greatness in its different forms that are within our scope. Power, strength, might, eminence, superiority are synonyms for greatness, but though they are necessary for a man they are liable to abuse. Unfortunately we often use them to harm others. This quality, therefore, required proper guidance, and that guidance came in the following Names of God:

(1) "Al-'Ali"; (2) "Al-A'la"; (3) "Al-Muta'al"; (4) "Al-'Azim"; (5) "Al-'Aziz"; (6) "Al-Kabir"; (7)"Al-Mutakabbir"; (8)"Al-Jabbar";(9) "Al-Qahhar"; (10) "Al-Qawiyy";(11)"Al-Qadir"; (14) "Al-Muqtadir"; (13) "Al-Qadeer"; (14) "Al-Jalil"; (15) "Al-Majid."

Other languages, English included, are not so rich as Arabic. Their paucity of vocabulary disables them to convey through their words the different shades of *Greatness* that we find in the above *Names*. I will, however, try to give some explanation. The first three names in the above category come from the same root," 'Alw," which means "greatness." The word "Ali" or "A'la" refers to the Highest Eminence that may come within one's reach, so much so that there remains no other degree of greatness. Like "'Azim" and "Kabir," the fourth and fifth Names, all of the first five Names are more or less generic in their connotation. They comprehend all forms of greatness. "Azim" and "Kabir," however, come

next in intensity to "'Ali" and those derived from the same root. They refer to greatness as an inherent quality. They also include an idea of comparison. "'Azim" is one who is held great in the estimation of others. "Kabir" speaks of the greatness belonging to some one in comparison with others. "Al-'Aziz" is a word very rich in significance, which may include mighty, potent, powerful, or strong in its absolute sense. It is the direct opposite to everything that is low and mean. It also means noble, honourable, glorious, or illustrious. On the other hand, it means one who is invincible and rough in his dealings with his enemies. But wisdom and knowledge are also the necessary adjuncts of "Aziz," *i.e.*, one who uses his power and strength with wisdom and knowledge. "Al-Mutakabbir," the seventh of the above-mentioned Names, refers to the measure of our excellence in goodness, beauty, and sublimity, excluding altogether the idea of pride and vanity. How strange it is that the very word, when used in Hindustani, signifies haughty, overbearing, and proud; yet in Arabic it means that Mutakabbir should neither be proud nor overbearing nor vainglorious in the display of his power. "Al-Jabbar" and "Al-Qahhar," the eighth and ninth Names in the above list, signify the power and influence which is exercised by their owners in bringing others under their control and making the latter subservient to the former's will. Such prominence should be accompanied by firmness and justice. It should

help the subordinate to bring out all that is best in himself. The subordinate may, for instance, be compared to a blind force and energy. The ruler, the possessor of this particular kind of greatness, should guide that energy into its proper channels. "Al-Qawiyy" is one who possesses both physical and spiritual strength in the highest degree, and uses them for the good of others. "Al-Qadir" and "Al-Muqtadir" and "Al-Qadeer," the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth, come from the same root, meaning might and power. But "Al-Muqtadir" refers to the possession of such power as enables man to face the hard things in life and succeed in campaigns that demand ability, perseverance, and courage. He encounters and surmounts all the difficulties that may arise in the performance of great things. "Al-Qadeer" refers to a man's highest achievements in wisdom and knowledge which he uses with power enough to surmount all the opposition that may come in his way. "Al-Jalil" (14) refers to such works performed by us as induce others to praise and glorify us for our achievements in the world. It necessitates the doing of something that may excite the wonder and surprise of others. "Al-Majid" makes generosity and liberality of mind a special feature of the man. He is "Majid" whose work is profitable to others.

It should, however, not be forgotten that these words sometimes convey the evil aspect of greatness. Nevertheless, when used as attributes of God they

refer to something good. For this reason the definite article "Al" is used as a prefix before every such word. The article indicates that the word has been used as a Divine Attribute. Greatness, as I have said before, is a necessary accompaniment of our character, but if it is not exercised according to the requirements of the Divine Attributes, it brings brutal force into play and causes oppression and tyranny in the world. Greatness is a blessing, but it becomes a curse to anyone with whom it goes beyond its prescribed limits. The Quranic attributes of God specify these limits, which, being observed, contribute to universal happiness and become a necessary constituent of our civilization.

After knowledge and power we require all attainments that may enable us to leave a memory behind us that may remain ever-living and green. We must do something, to secure self-determination in its best form, to the race to which we belong. Those among us who have been blessed with a position to rule others, such as kings, or persons possessing sovereign political authority, stand in special need of such qualities. The Quran, however, has not left us without an exemplar for our imitation in this respect. "Al-Hayy" (Ever-living) and "Al-Qayyum" (Self-subsisting) are two Names of God, and the well-known "Throne Verse" in Chapter II of the Quran gives the following characters of God as such:

"Allah is He besides Whom there is no god, the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting, by Whom all subsist; *slumber does not overtake Him nor sleep;* whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; who is he that can *intercede with Him but by His permission?* He *knows* what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot comprehend any thing out of His knowledge except what He pleases; *His knowledge* extends over the heavens and earth, and the preservation of them both *tires Him not*, and He is the *Most High, the Great.*" (ii. 255).

This verse speaks of seven qualities (in words which I have italicized) which should belong to those who aspire to keep their memory green. The quotation refers, first, to an unusual vigilance of awakening where slumber does not overtake a person. In our case it does not mean that we should deprive ourselves of that blessing of God, sleep, which is essential to our mortal existence, but that those who wish to attain an exalted position should ever remain watchful over our affairs, whether these be large landed proprietors or captains of industry. The verse, secondly, speaks of the extensiveness of the country that is under one's rule. In an individual case it may mean large estates or extensive business. The following five qualities, however, should attach to rulers as well as to those in positions of responsibility. These are as follows:

(1) Accessibility to intercession. No favouritism to be allowed in the management of affairs: no one to be encouraged to intercede in the interests of those who do not deserve any attention or regard.

(2) Vastness of knowledge concerning everything.

(3) Secrecy of affairs from those unconcerned, only such to be taken into confidence as are tried and indispensable.

(4) Not to feel fatigued in the preservation or maintenance of things necessary to existence. One so placed should always remain active in the discharge of his duties.

(5) Possession of greatness in every form.

The verse is a lesson for the rising nations in the East. Western people possess those qualities and therein lies the secret of their success. If the Almighty and Omnipotent God has to remain everliving and watchful and untiring in the rule of the universe, what of us who are decidedly weak and powerless? If the Quran speaks thus of God, it is only to inspire us to do these things.

Here I may quote another verse from the Holy Quran that gives such attributes of God as belong to a king. It means that those who have been given the responsibility of rule and government

should walk humbly with the Lord, imitating His attributes. The verse is as follows:

"He is Allah, besides Whom there is no god; the King, the Holy, and free from all defects, the Maintainer of Peace, the Grantor of Securities, the Mighty, the Subduer of others to His Will, the Possessor of every greatness; Glory be to Allah from what they set up with Him." (lix. 23).

The quotation is too eloquent to need any commentary. I will, however, say a word concerning two of the attributes mentioned. First, "As-Salam"—The maintainer of peace. It does not only require a king to maintain peace among his own people, but to keep peace with every other person, whether among his subjects or not. In fact, he should help to maintain universal peace in the world. The second attribute is "Al-Jabbar"—The Supreme Being who subdues others to His Will and makes their actions subservient thereto. This subjection on the part of the ruled should always be conducive to their own good and not made a means of pampering their rulers' self-indulgence. Unfortunately, subject-races under foreign rulers are always exploited to satisfy the extravagances of the ruling nations, who seek their strength in the others' weakness.

"Al-Jabbar" refers to that kind of ascendancy that prohibits people from indulging in things that are injurious to their own interests and compels them to remain on the right path.

Now I will speak of such of the Divine Attributes as may guide us to success in our daily occupations. Big concerns often fall on account of some error on the part of those who manage them. It is the duty of a revealed Book from God to guide men to a successful career in their earthly affairs as well as to spiritual excellence. I have said many times before things that religion does not come from God merely to supply us with things that have no bearing on our daily doing. Our Creator has equipped us with faculties which come into play when we are engaged in the management of mundane business affairs. We have also been given various appetites and desires, which set in motion the whole machinery of civilization, and if God has bestowed upon us the power to perform great things in this life He will surely teach us the morals and ethics which will enable us to accomplish the great task. In this respect the Divine Attribute "Rabb" is most comprehensive in its significance. It means the Creator, the Nourisher, the Maintainer, the Lawgiver, the Regularizer, the Bringer of Things to Perfection. It appertains, without doubt, to Him Who is Omnipotent: "And His Command when He intends anything is only to it, 'Be,' and so it is" (Quran, xxxvi. 82). But He is pleased to work out His Will in accordance with methods which should be ours when attending to our daily business. All the attributes of God disclosed in the pages of the Quran are meant to serve this same purpose.

They are as specimens for our imitation. Within the scope of its meaning, the word "Rabb" includes some twenty attributes that explain the different methods adopted by God when He acts as Rabb in the universe. I give them here in the order in which I presume them to work, when things are created and brought to perfection.

"Al-Bari"—Maker; "Al-Badi"—He Who creates things out of nothing. We cannot make things out of nothing, but the two attributes in us, the spirit of invention and the urge to discovery, enable us to organize great things and find out means and processes hitherto unknown.

"Al-Mussawwir"—the Fashioner. He Who designs things beforehand. He performs them and then fashions them in His mind and puts them, as it were, on canvas. Before we engage ourselves in any task we should have a clear idea as to what we have to do. We should estimate and design things before beginning to put them into concrete shape.

"Al-Khaliq"—the Creator of things from other thing; He Who combines different things so that they make a new thing. Such work we ourselves undertake. Nay, our sole task is either to unite things or separate them from each other and therein lies all our efficiency. But before we set to work we ought to acquaint ourselves with all the qualities inherent in other things, and for this we have to

follow three further Attributes. First, "Al-Batin"—He Who knows the inner or intrinsic state of things. Secondly, "Al-Muhsi"—He Who comprehends all that is in other things and the different measures in which things act. Thirdly, "Al-Wajid"—He Who knows where to find the things necessary for His work. Unless we qualify ourselves with the proper knowledge of the materials we have to work in, and their whereabouts, and know the proportions in which they are to be used we cannot hope to achieve success. Then come three other Attributes, "Al-Jami," Al-Jabbar," and "Al-Fattah": the first means Combiner and Collector of things that lie separate from each other. "Al-Jabbar" is one Who compels others to work according to His will. Similarly, the man who works under us should do so according to our direction, and we should use our material in such a way that it may work out our design. Thirdly, "Al-Fattah"—The Opener of hidden qualities. We should know how the things we use will exhibit their inherent qualities according to our design.

"Al-Hadi"—He Who puts others on the right path. Whether in regard to the material we use, or to the people who serve under us, we must see that they function as they should. "Ar-Raqib"—He Who watches keenly. We should mark vigilantly the progress of things, with a view to helping them on and protecting them from harm and danger. In

fact we have here to follow three other Divine Attributes, that is to say, "Al-Mani"—One Who keeps things separate and prevents them from harming each other. We must do the same even when dealing with lifeless material. Things possess properties contrary to each other and unless vigilantly dealt with are liable to do immense harm. "Al-Qayyum"—He Who is the maintainer of things and enables them to subsist. We must act in this way concerning everything we use in our business in order to preserve it and keep it in working order.

In fact, the word "Rabb" is very rich in its meanings, and here I would refer to one in particular. "Rabb" is He Who brings the faculties latent in things to perfection and looks to the completion of the work in His Hand. All these Attributes inspire us with the desire for full knowledge of the properties of everything in the universe, and the ways under which they are disclosed. It also demands from us that perseverance and constancy which alone can secure perfection and bring success to our business. In this connection I may refer to two other names, "Al-Mubdi"—He Who creates things for the first time, and "Al-Mu'id,"—He Who knows how to repeat the creation. This means that we should not engage ourselves haphazard in our occupation. We ought to know precisely what we intend to do, how to begin a thing properly and how to repeat the process if necessary.

Let my readers, especially the Muslims among them, ponder all these attributes of God. They have been revealed to us only to guide us in our daily life. Let us examine, for example, the process we adopt in our work. Do we take heed of all the caution and vigilance disclosed in these attributes? We often encounter failure and but rarely achieve success, and the reason of it is that we do not act in accordance with the Divine ways.

It would not be out of place if I refer to the first five verses of chapter lxxix. of the Holy Quran, which lay down the principles that would carry us to the acme of success in every walk of life.

These verses speak of the calamity that must overtake those who do not make proper use of their time and opportunities. The morals taught in these verses are very extensive in their application. They, in fact, apply to every activity in all departments of life. The verses run as follows:

(1) "Consider those that incline (to their business) fully."

(2) "And those that go forth (to it) briskly (or lively)."

(3) "And those that swim (in it) swimmingly."

(4) "Then those who are foremost going ahead."

(5) "Then those who regulate the affairs."

Every beginner in a business naturally aspires to reach the height of success in his business. It is

not difficult to do so, but we do not go the right way to work about it. The first verse, however, speaks of what is necessary for us all if we are to achieve efficiency in our work. The words are very eloquent—"An-Nazi'ati Gharqa." I translate "Nazi'ati" as those who incline. The word comes from Naza', meaning strife or dispute. The other word—"gharqa"—means to be drawn. The verse says, that when we choose anything for our occupation we should incline to it wholly and solely, as if we are drawn into it and have put other things aside; as though we had no concern with them. The fifth verse in the above quotation refers to that which ought to be our ideal in such a case. A man should become expert in his affairs and be in a position to regulate them in a masterly manner, so that he may be deemed an authority on the subject.

If we are really anxious to reach this climax we must become absorbed in our work and engage ourselves in it so wholeheartedly as to pay no attention to anything else. It may seem hard at first and a sort of drudgery, but we must keep on giving our sole attention to our work until we begin to enjoy it. We should approach it briskly, and take a lively interest in it. We must not cease striving until our work has become our sole pleasure. This is the meaning of the second verse. But we must go further. We must attain such a degree of experience in it that our work may become as effortless as the swimming

of a fish in a river. The verse refers to the agility and facility that we must achieve in our business; but this is not the final goal, for we must exert ourselves still more until we become pre-eminent in our work. We must outstrip others so that we may forge ahead of all. It is then that we become an admitted authority among our compeers, who will come to us for guidance.

The whole universe exhibits in her work the above-mentioned five qualities. This is the true theology that we read in the pages of Nature, and religion is not worthy of its name if it fails to goad us towards such principles of life. The Creator of the Universe seems to remain ever busy in the work of His Creation. It is neither cumbersome to Him nor does it tire Him; and we must be like Him if we wish to attain success.

Here again I draw the attention of my readers to the fact that revelation should read us such lessons as may set our faculties to work; but it should not teach doctrines that tend to damp our zeal and enthusiasm in worldly matters. Those who say that revelation has not furthered our civilization should ponder over these verses. Do they not galvanize our energies and ensure us success if we act upon them? The lesson has been read to us in the Book from God, and it is our religious duty to act upon it. Herein lies its force in persuading

its votaries to follow it submissively. My Muslim readers should especially consider that the Quran demads of them that they should attend to their worldly affairs diligently. They should not forget that, in the eyes of Islam, it is the true spirit of religion which bids men remain unconcerned with the life of this world.

Before I conclude this part of my subject, I will refer to some of the names of God which inspired the early Muslims to discover certain prominent Laws of Nature which became the bases of their scientific researches. Here, again, I begin with the word "Rabb."

The attribute means first of all Creator, but it also signifies the "fostering of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of completion." This signification of the word is not an accidental discovery on my part. The word has been used in this sense in Arabic literature before Islam, as Imam Raghib says in his lexicon of Quranic words, written many centuries ago. The theory of evolution came to Darwin's mind in a very hazy way in the middle of the last century, and Spencer put it into its present shape; yet the law was known to the Arabs as their writings show; and it was this Divine Attribute, "Rabb," that drew their attention to the law of evolution as

working in Nature. It is impossible to exaggerate the service that the discovery of this law has done towards the furtherance of science and civilization; but the actual law itself has been explained most eloquently in the first Name of God given in the Quran. In the exposition of this attribute, the Book, in many places, refers to the various grades in which things in creation have to reach their perfection. The Book also says in most forcible language that the *laws of God are unchangeable.* I think this disclosure as to the unchangeability of the law is much more important than any other discovery. All branches of science have been based upon this principle. In fact, law itself signifies a system which remains always unchanged. No one can then belittle the authority of the Quran when it reveals the importance of the above-mentioned feature of law. There are two other Names, however, which should receive special consideration from those engaged in scientific research: "Az-Zahir" and "Al-Batin." These Names are among those Divine Attributes which help us chiefly in our investigations of the matter around us. "Al-Batin" means One Who knows the hidden properties of things in Nature. "Az-Zahir" is He Who reveals them. These two actions are unceasingly at work in the universe; and they teach us that everything in Nature is a repository of latent faculties that should be brought to light.

It is for us to make researches for the discovery of these hidden things; and for us to find out laws that may help us to subdue such latent qualities to our service. These two things, concealment and manifestation, are responsible for all our scientific investigations. They induced the early Muslims to read the secrets of Nature, and thus enrich the world with wealth undreamed of before.

God has been declared in the Holy Quran to be the Originator of everything, and He is the One to Whom everything in Creation returns. This means that everything in Creation tends to return to its origin; and this led the followers of the Quran to believe in the law of gravitation, which developed into the law of attraction.

"Al-Jami' "—The Collector, The Combiner—refers to the law which keeps the various ingredients of a thing in unison; this is commonly known as the law of Cohesion. In this connection another attribute—"Al-Wadud"—He Who loves intensely—inspired the early Muslims to believe in the Law of Affinity, and they concluded that this is a sort of love reposed in everything that impels it towards things of the same class.

In contrast to these Attributes, another—"Al-Mani' " by name—speaks of the Law of Repulsion. The word means He Who keeps things separated from each other. They remain, as it

were, at arm's length. Then come the two great laws—the law of expansion and the law of contraction. "Al-Basit" is He Who opens things and discloses all that lies in them, while "Al-Qabiz" is He Who contracts things. We also find the law of conservancy spoken of in other two names—"Al-Baqi" and "Al-Hasib." The former means He Who preserves things, and the latter, He Who looks to the safety of things. We are assured that the material which exist in the universe for our use has been created indestructible. It may change its form, but its essence remains intact.

The Holy Quran lays special stress on this fact. It says that everything in Nature has preordained measures. Every thing that comes from the heavens is again given measured proportion, and it is for us to respect and observe those measures when we use them. Though it is a universal law to be observed on each plane of humanity, yet it plays a most important part in physical science. Science chiefly means the knowledge of measures and proportions which, when observed, work miracles. In this connection we find another Attribute, "Al-Muhsi'"—He Who knows the measures and qualities of things. The name enjoins us to possess knowledge of the measures aforesaid, otherwise we should have to close all chemical laboratories.

"Al-Khaliq"—He Who mixes various things so as to create new things. The name is responsible for the laws of combination under which things of contrary qualities combine to produce others with new properties not existing in their ingredients.

I have enumerated here a few of the Names that inspired the early workers in science to discover those basic laws, but every attribute of God works in the universe in the form of some law. We have, therefore, to ponder over these Names again; they will disclose many other laws working in Nature, but not within our ken.

I conclude this aspect of the Holy Names with the mention of two other Names, just as extensive in their signification in relation to the various aspects of humanity—"Ar-Rahman" and "Ar-Rahim." The former refers to the beneficence of God which has already created everything we need in life—things which have come into existence even before life began. The latter refers to that Divine Beneficence which makes our labours bring forth fruit a hundredfold. The two attributes assure us that everything material that we need to make life happy has already been created, and we use it rightly, our actions will never remain unrequited.

The whole creation is full of such material, heaped up and running over, and it only awaits

our exertion to bring about the desired result. With this assurance Muslims approached Nature and unravelled it. They enriched the world and gave it blessings unknown before. It is impossible to praise Muslims too highly for their great contribution to civilization. I may say that the world before Islam was as though it were living from hand to mouth, with very scanty material. The Quran came and informed mankind of the various kinds of riches, beauty and wealth that were stored up in Nature, and created for human enjoyment. In the light of this teaching, the Muslims not only widened the scope of knowledge and learning, but introduced new treasures of happiness and comfort. From food to high art the Book inspires man to acquire everything that may supply his need or appetite, but without exceeding the limits. The Quran clearly declared that every blessing of God was meant for those who will use it in the service of God, which in the Holy Quran stands for the service of humanity. The world was without delicacies of food before Islam, but we find dainty things on Muslim tables in great variety; delicious food, healthy drinks, tasty pickles and preserves and various kinds of fruits. Man used to clothe himself in coarse cotton materials and rough woollen fabric to protect himself from the inclemency of the weather. The skins of animals

were use for clothing in colder climates, but Islam brought every kind of material,—cotton, wool, silk, and goat-hide into use,—and in the most beautiful designs. In India, clothing was of khadi—coarse cotton cloth,—and a rough sort of silk was worn by the gentry, but when the country came under Muslim Rule it made wonderful improvements in this respect. The weavers in the reign of only one Moghul Emperor Akbar the Great worked up silk and cotton into thirty designs. I can hardly find anything existing at present in the list of materials worn by well-to-do men in India that does not owe its origin to the Moghul Rule. I find similar improvements in architecture and the means of conveyance, with all the advances in traffic, gardening, irrigation and navigation, crockery and household furniture. On the other hand, Muslims did not neglect to fortify their towns against attack, or to cultivate a martial spirit. In fact, it would need a most voluminous literature to detail all that was founded by Muslims to advance our civilization and happiness; and it is a religious book like the Quran that inspires its reader with these things, in their choicest form. Muslims acted upon two principles—first to use every blessing of God in its best form, and in a way that might embrace beauty, pleasure and comfort; secondly, to use these things in such a manner as not to disturb the

happiness of others or lead to indulgence and extravagance. The Quran prophesied that man would rise continually by following its precept, and declared, by way of metaphor, that Islam would create a new heaven and a new earth. No one can deny the fulfilment of the prediction. Western culture has inherited the first part of Muslim civilization and is improving wonderfully, but they are lacking on the moral side. And when I say that all this was inspired by the Quran it shows that religion from God does not come to supply the human race with a sickly theology and deter us from the enjoyment of life. Rather does it come to enhance our enjoyment, but in a way that may not engender bestial passion in us, at the expense of others.

I have strayed somewhat from my subject, but it was necessary, in a way, to do so when enumerating the various bounties that God has showered on us.

To resume. So far I have dealt with attributes that assist us individually, but we are sociable by nature, and no society can exist without the possession of certain morals. I do not here propose to write a treatise on sociology based upon the Quranic teaching, so I will only refer to those Holy Names by the imitation of which we can build up a strong social fabric. These attributes can be divided into two classes, first, those that induce

us to do good to others, and secondly those that refer to the attitude we should adopt when we find others in error.

Under the first heading I give the following: "Rabbul-'Alamin." This has various meanings, but one will suffice us here—Nourishing of all. It excludes all considerations of race, colour, country or creed; we should look on all alike, and our gift should go to every creature of God. Whatever has been given us by God should go to the help of others. I have already said something about "Ar-Rahman" and " Ar-Rahim." They, too, have various shades of meaning. Both words are from the same root, *Rahm*, that means mercy, but they refer to different forms of mercy. They convey the idea of beneficence, goodness and charity, but not one of these words signifies what is conveyed in the two words. "Rahman" speaks of the beneficence that we should show in looking to others' needs, even though they deserve no such kindness. It should not come in the form of compensation, but of our own accord; and sometimes even at a time when the needs of others have not yet made themselves felt. It is like the kindness of a mother who makes various preparations for the comfort of a baby still in the womb.

"Rahim" signifies that beneficence which we show in rewarding the actions of others, but our

reward should be many times greater than that which the actions of others deserve.

"Al-Karim"—Generous and Bounteous. "Al-Wahhab"—He Who showers His blessings on others regardless of their merits. "Ar-Razzaq"—Nourisher. "Al-Mu'ti"—Giver of Gifts. "An-Nafi' "—He Who brings profit to all and does not stand in needs of others. "Al-Ghani" and "Al-Mughni"—He Who is rich and does not stand in need of others, but makes others rich and free from want. Elsewhere the Quran declares that our Lord is neither poor nor needy. Then comes another Name of God that is very significant in this respect. It is "As-Samad." It means He Who looks to the needs of others and on whom all depend for their needs. To equip ourselves with Divine Attributes is equivalent in Islam to the worship of God, and that is the conception of Worshipping God expressed in the Quran; and it is therefore our religious duty to become rich and amass wealth, not, of course, by the exploitation of others or by robbing them of their wealth.

Islam, therefore, is not a religion that favours poverty. It preaches charity without doubt, but not to an extent that may reduce us to poverty. Though not a sin, still it is not desirable in Islam to be without wealth.

"Al-Wadud"—He Who is Love and loves others intensely. "Al-Wali"—The Guardian of

others. "Al-Mujib"—He Who listens to the prayers of others and responds to one who beseeches. "Al-Hadi"—He Who guides others in the right path "Ar-Ra'uf"—He Who out of kindness wards off impending troubles and evils overtaking others. "Al-Mu'min"—The Maintainer of Peace. "Al-Muhaimin"—He Who guards others in the time of danger. "Al-Hafiz"—The Protector.

All these Attributes are too clear to demand any further explanation. I wish one in ten thousands of us could equip himself with them or some of them, and then the world would find itself a heaven. Poverty and misery would be no more, nor would there be any complaint of non-employment or destitution. If those in power could act as does the Nourisher of All in the universe, such action would extinguish all racial bias and colour prejudice. It would redeem foreign rule from all that is undesirable in the eyes of the subject races; in fact, there would remain no question of foreign and native, those two words most hateful and fatal to all hope of universal peace.

Now I come to such Names as will assist us when we have to deal with those who are in the wrong and commit offences. "Al-'Adil"—All justice and equity—is one of the Names of God, but is explained by another Attribute "Malik Yaum-id-Din"—Master of the Day of Requital.

"Malik" also means Owner. It refers to another beautiful quality exhibited by God in dealing with our offences. He is the Owner, and we are among His chattels. He chastises us for our errors in a way that may not damage His property in us. He often forgives us, but if He finds that His forgiveness increases inordinacy in us and makes us stubborn, He punishes us for our good. A judge is bound to meet the demands of the law in every case, but the ways of God are different from those of the average judge. If the offence of a person affects others, He punishes that person unless he is forgiven by the offended one. But if a person commits a wrong that affects his own self, God gives punishment or forgiveness as the case may be with the object of reform. There is no vengeance in the ways of the Lord. Punishment with Him is a disciplinary measure and not a satisfaction of anger or revenge. We find sometimes, in the case of people guilty of political offences, that the punishment awarded them is so excessive as practically to wipe out the offender and his family. Unfortunately, political prestige among the ruling class has now entered into the realm of justice though it is the last thing that should affect the mind of a judge.

In short, "Maliki Yaumi 'd-Din"—Master of the Day of Requital—is the only Attribute in the Holy Qur-an that speaks of God's punishment but, on the contrary, we find several other Attributes

that speak of mercy and grace in connection with sinners, for example "Al-Ghafur"—The Great Forgiver, "Al-'Afuww"—The Pardoner, "Al-Tawwab"—The Acceptor of Repentance, Who returns to His Mercy when He finds an inordinate person repentant. I say again, if we could follow the ways of the Lord in our dealings with those who do wrong to us, we should find more correction and repentance among wicked people than would come from any penal measures.

There are various other Divine Attributes mentioned in Quran, some of them such as wlll, if we possess them, increase our personality. Others should be ours to enable us to keep order and discipline among those under us.

These Attributes are vast in their meaning and possess diverse aspects applicable to every department of business life. In these pages I can only give the meanings which appear to me necessary for the building up of character. I enumerate now the rest of the Attributes, and begin with the qualities essential for the beautifying of our personality.

"Al-Halim"—He Who shows forbearance or clemency when wronged by others; He Who conceals offences; moderate, gentle, leisurely in His dealings, not of hasty temper, grave and calm.

"As-Shakur "—He Who approves or rewards others largely for small deeds. He in Whose estimation the work of others has prospered but meagrely. He multiplies His reward to them. Generally the words means thankful, or one who does his utmost in showing his gratitude with his heart and tongue.

"Al-Hamid "—He Who is praised in every way, He Who is commended and mentioned with approvation.

"Al-Haqq"—He Who is Right, Correct. He Whose work is suitable to the requirements of justice, wisdom and righteousness. The word includes the ideas of fitness, propriety, competency or adaptability.

"Al-Hasab"—He Who is sufficient as a reckoner or as a giver of what suffices. The word refers to the prompt rendering of the account, as well as to the asking of others to give account.

"As-Sabur"—He Whose patience is greater than others, He Who is calm in suffering the pangs of affliction. He Who withholds Himself from impatience and His tongue from complaint. He Who faces hard trials with endurance; it may mean the long-sufferer, and Who does not hastily take revenge upon the disobedient.

"Al-muqsit "—He Who acts equably or justly.

"Al-Majid"—One Who possesses glory, honour and dignity. Who is righteous in His actions as

well as munificent and liberal and good in disposition.

"Al-Wasiyy"—He Who is relied upon in the management of affairs, He in Whom one may confide in the disposal of things or rely on for the management of affairs.

"Al-Shahid" He Who is present and bears witness to things rightly.

"Al-Ahad"— The one, The Unique in his ways.

"Al-Mutali"—Superior to others in excellent qualities.

"Zu 'l-Jalal wa 'l-Ikram "—He Who possesses greatness, majesty and bounty.

"Al-Barr"—The Compassionate, The Very Benign to His Servants; The Boundless in goodness and beneficence.

"Al-Baqi"—He Who servives others and keeps things intact or in the state in which they are.

"Al-Rafi' "—He Who raises other's status and condition.

"Al-Mui'zz "—He Who increases another's honour, and "Al-Muzil " is He Who lowers others in rank.

"Al-Hayy"—He Who is everliving and makes others so.

"Al-Mumit "—He Who puts another to death, He Who annihilates.

"Al-Muqaddim"—He Who gives others a preference or puts them at the head of affairs.

"Al-Mu'akhkhir"—He Who reduces others to the lowest standard.

"Al-Awwal"—The first, and "Al-Akhir"—The Last.

"Al-Matin"—The Strong, The Stout, The Firm, The Hard.

"Al-Wajid"—He Who knows the whereabouts of all things.

"Al-Muntaqim"—He Who for the establishing for good avenges Himself upon wrongdoers.

"Al-Waliyy"—The Owner, The Protector.

"An-Nur"—The Light.

"Ar-Rashid"—He Who puts others on the "Right Path."

Let us ponder over these Names and stretch our imagination to what extent we will, we shall fail to improve on the list. Every exellent quality that a civilized man should possess will be found in it. It must not be forgotten that these attributes are used in a good sense when spoken of God. For this reason the Qur-an calls them the excellent Names of God. For example, "Matin" means hard and strong, but in the case of God, the hardness referred to is to serve some good purpose, and the same is true of every attributes. Therefore we have to clothe ourselves with these attributes for the purpose of doing good, and not to cause harm to others. In fact, the Holy Book was sent to us to show us the

ways of the Lord, in which He acts in the universe; so that we may create in ourselves such qualities as may meet the requirements of the example set us and lead us to success. The rest of the book either explains them or shows us the method by which we may equip ourselves with them. It also metions the evils that nulify or neutralize them. Had there been no code of civilization in the world, these hundred Names would have been sufficient to act as beacon-lights in the troubled waters of life. Let us follow them and adorn our characters with them, and I see no reason why a person with a single grain of wisdom in his head should take exception to such a course. We have to live on the earth where everything follows a certain course prescribed for it. Our happiness lies mainly in our adaptability thereto; and so the Qur-an has confered on us the greatest boon we can imagine by lighting us on the surer way.

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